

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CARACA 08030 01 OF 02 251848Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
TRSE-00 OMB-01 ACDA-12 MCT-02 HA-05 IO-13 AGRE-00
EB-08 COME-00 AID-05 HUD-01 HEW-04 OES-09 /128 W
-----110794 251916Z /44

R 251723Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3611
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
USCINCLANT NORFOLK VA
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS CZ

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USCINCLANT FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PEPR, PINT, VE
SUBJECT: THIS WEEK IN VENEZUELA

REF: CARACAS 7716

SUMMARY: PARTY SLATE SELECTIONS RUN INTO TROUBLE: CSE
EXTENDS DEADLINE FOR ANNOUNCING PARTY TICKETS. VENEZUELA
SENDS MILITARY AIRCRAFT TO NICARAGUA TO TRANSPORT "SANDINISTA"
GUERRILLAS. THE CAMPAIGN WEEK: A CONTINUED LULL. GOVERNOR MANTILLA
TO TAKE OVER MINISTRY OF INTERIOR. VENEZUELAN STUDENT
RETURNS AFTER ARGENTINE IMPRISONMENT. RECORD GRAIN CROP
FORECAST FOR VENEZUELA. FOREIGN MINISTER CONSALVI VISITS
PERU.END SUMMARY.

1. PARTY SLATE SELECTION RUN INTO TROUBLE: CSE EXTENDS
DEADLINE FOR ANNOUNCING PARTY SLATES.
THE PROCESS OF PUTTING TOGETHER PARTY SLATES RAN INTO
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PAGE 02 CARACA 08030 01 OF 02 251848Z

TROUBLE THIS WEEK AND THE SUPREME ELECTORAL COUNCIL (CSE)
RESPONDED TO PRESSURES FROM THE PARTIES EXTENDING BY 10
DAYS, TO SEPTEMBER 13, THE DEADLINE FOR ANNOUNCING PARTY
TICKETS. COPEI AND ACCION DEMOCRATICA HAVE BEEN STRUGGLING
THIS WEEK WITH THE CONFLICTING PRESSURES FROM WITHIN THEIR
RESPECTIVE PARTIES IN SELECTING NOMINEES FOR CONGRESS, STATE
ASSEMBLIES AND MUNICIPAL COUNCILS. BOTH HAVE BEEN

FACED WITH THE SELECTION PROBLEM OF REWARDING PARTY LOYALISTS WITH POLITICAL POST, BUT COPEI HAS FOUND ITSELF IN A PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT POSITION SINCE ITS ALLIANCES WITH INDEPENDENT PARTIES HAVE SIPHONED OFF ABOUT A THIRD OF ITS CONGRESSIONAL SEATS NOW COMMITTED TO INDEPENDENTS IN EXCHANGE FOR THEIR POLITICAL SUPPORT. THE REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER OF SLOTS AVAILABLE TO THE COPEI PARTY FAITHFUL HAS MADE THE SELECTION PROCESS AND HORSE-TRADING IN THE PARTY PARTICULARLY INTENSE. AD IS CAUGHT IN THE SAME NUTCRACKER BUT FOR SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT REASONS. IT IS A LARGER PARTY WITH ABOUT THREE TIMES AS MANY POSTULANTS (WHO CONSIDER THEMSELVES WORTHY AFTER YEARS OF PARTY MILITANCY) AS THERE ARE ELECTED POSITIONS AVAILABLE. IN ADDITION, BOTH PARTIES HAVE MADE SPECIAL EFFORTS TO UPGRADE THE QUALITY OF NOMINEES, THEREBY EXACERBATING THE AGONY OF THE SELECTION PROCESS.

2. VENEZUELA SENDS MILITARY AIRCRAFT TO TRANSPORT SANDINISTA GUERRILLAS AND PRISONERS. THE GOV ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE, AUGUST 23, REPORTING THAT VENEZUELAN MILITARY AIRCRAFT HAD BEEN SENT TO NICARAGUA TO ASSIST IN TRANSPORTING "SANDINISTA" GUERRILLAS AND POLITICAL PRISONERS OUT OF THE COUNTRY ON AUGUST 24. THE AFTERNOON OF AUGUST 24, PRESIDENT PEREZ HELD AN IMPROMPTU NEWS CONFERENCE IN WHICH HE REVEALED TO THE VENEZUELAN PRESS THAT ALL THE "SANDINISTAS" AND NICARAGUAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 CARACA 08030 01 OF 02 251848Z

POLITICAL PRISONERS HAD REMAINED IN PANAMA. HE THEN WENT ON TO DEFEND VENEZUELA'S ROLE (SEPTOL) IN THE INCIDENT "BECAUSE WE BELIEVE IN THE CAUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND BECAUSE BOTH THE NICARAGUAN GOVERNMENT AND THE POLITICIANS OF THE "SANDINISTA" GROUP ASKED FOR OUR HELP."

3. THE CAMPAIGN WEEK: A CONTINUED LULL. AS A RESULT OF THE PROBLEMS BOTH PARTIES HAVE ENCOUNTERED IN THE SELECTION OF THEIR PARTY SLATES, THE CAMPAIGN RUMBLED ON IN LOW GEAR THIS WEEK. AD CANDIDATE PINERUA CAME OUT WITH A TOUGH LAW AND ORDER PROGRAM ON AUGUST 23, WHICH WAS PROMPTLY CRITICIZED BY THE COPEI CHALLENGER AS INEFFECTIVE. COPEI ASSERTED THAT PINERUA'S PROGRAM OF MORE JAILS AND A LARGER POLICE FORCE WERE HARDLY THE ANSWER TO THE RISING CRIME RATE. HERRERA SAID THE SOLUTION LAY IN ATTACKING THE COUNTRY'S BASIC SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF HOUSING, EDUCATION AND JUVENILE DELINQUENCY. DURING A BREAKFAST NEWS CONFERENCE AUGUST 24, HERRERA ALSO TOUCHED UPON LATIN AMERICAN INTEGRATION SAYING THAT ANDEAN PACT ACTION SHOULD BE COORDINATED THROUGH THE LATIN AMERICAN ECONOMIC SYSTEM (SELA) AND THAT THE ANDEAN PACT SHOULD BE BASED ON A "COMMON DENOMINATOR OF DEMOCRACY." FINALLY,

STILL UNABLE TO RID HIMSELF OF THE "BAD PENNY" OF COMMUNITARIAN SOCIETY (A VAGUE CONCEPT OF THE COPEI PARTY WHICH CALDERA IGNORED DURING HIS PRESIDENCY AND WHICH HERRERA DEFINES LOOSELY AS VALUE OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND DENIAL OF STATE AUTHORITY) WHICH HAS HAUNTED HIS CAMPAIGN, HE REITERATED THAT THIS CONCEPT WOULD NOT BE PART OF HIS GOVERNMENT PROGRAM. INSTEAD, HE SAID HE WOULD EMPHASIZE THE "PROMOTER STATE" I.E., LESS STATE INTERVENTION IN THE ECONOMY.

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PAGE 01 CARACA 08030 02 OF 02 251902Z
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JRWG GHTS CZ

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 CARACAS 8030

4. GOVERNOR MANTILLA TO TAKE OVER MINISTRY OF INTERIOR.
THE PRESS CONFIRMED THIS WEEK THAT FEDERAL DISTRICT GOVERNOR, MANUEL MANTILLA, WOULD TAKE OVER THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AS SOON AS MINISTER OCTAVIO LEPAGE LEAVES FOR THE AD CAMPAIGN. LUIS AUGUSTO VEGAS BENEDETTI, FORMER HEAD OF THE GOV'S AGRICULTURAL MARKETING CORPORATION (CORPOMERCADEO) WILL BECOME GOVERNOR OF THE FEDERAL DISTRICT.

5. VENEZUELAN STUDENT RETURNS AFTER ARGENTINIEN IMPRISONMENT.

A VENEZUELAN STUDENT, MILTON MARINELLI, ACCOMPANIED BY HIS ARGENTINE WIFE AND SON, RETURNED TO VENEZUELA AFTER HAVING BEEN ARRESTED AND SUBSEQUENTLY "DISAPPEARING" FOR SEVERAL MONTHS IN ARGENTINA. MARINELLI HAD BEEN STUDYING IN ARGENTINA FOR SEVERAL YEARS UNDER THE GOV'S GRAN MARISCAL DE AYACUCHO SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM BEFORE HIS ARREST (ON MAY 4,1978) AND DISAPPEARANCE.COMMENT:

THE MARINELLI CASE HAS BEEN WIDELY PUBLICIZED HERE AND THE
FOCUS OF INTENSE DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY BETWEEN THE GOV
AND THE GOA, WHICH LED TO HIS DISCOVERY IN AN OBSCURE
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PAGE 02 CARACA 08030 02 OF 02 251902Z

ARGENTINE PRISON AND RELEASE. THE FOREIGN MINISTER
TOLD EMBOFFS THAT MARINELLI, ARRESTED AND IPRISONED FOR
SUBVERSION, HAD MERELY ATTENDED POLITICAL MEETING.
END COMMENT.

6. RECORD GRAIN CROP FORECASTS FOR VENEZUELA.
BLESSED WITH GOOD WEATHER, IMPROVED SEED, EXPANDED
IRRIGATION AND ACREAGE, PRODUCTION IN THE VENEZUELAN
CEREAL SECTOR IS FORECAST AT A RECORD LEVEL FOR THE
SECOND CONSECUTIVE YEAR. CORN POUTPUT FOR 1978 IS
EXPECTED TO BE UP 48 PERCENT OVER THAT OF LAST YEAR WHILE
GRAIN SORGHUM IS PREDICTED TO ADVANCE 53 PERCENT OVER
THE 1977 HARVEST. THE RICE CROP FOR 1978 IS FORECAST
AT 300,000 TONS, 10 PERCENT BELOW LAST YEAR'S OUTPUT.
IT'S TILL CONSIDERED A GOOD CROP. IF THE WEATHER HOLDS
OUT AND THE STORAGE BINS DON'T LEAK, VENEZUELA'S CROP
WILL STILL ONLY MAKE A SUPERFICIAL DENT IN REDUCING THE
HEAVY RELIANCE ON CEREAL IMPORTS.

7. FOREIGN MINISTER CONSALVI VISITS PERU.
FONMIN SIMON ALBERTO CONSALVI MADE AN OFFICIAL TWO-DAY
VISIT TO PERU AUGUST 23-25, MEETING WITH HIS COUNTERPART
FONMIN JOSE DE LA PUENTE, PRESIDENT MORALES BERMUDEZ
AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY, HAYA DE
LA TORRE. COMMENT: CONSALVI'S VISIT RESULTED FROM A
PERSONAL INVITATION BY PERUVIAN FONMIN. THE GOV HAS
BEEN EXTREMELY CONCERNED ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE RETURN
TO DEMOCRACY IN PERU. LOCAL CARACAS PRESS OF
AUGUST 25 HEADLINED THE HUMAN RIGHTS PORTION OF THE COMMUNIQUE
SIGNED AT THE CONCLUSION OF CONSALVI'S VISIT.

8. OTHER REPORTING THIS WEEK INCLUDED: HUMAN RIGHTS AND
MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT BANKS-VENEZUELAN VIEWS (CARACAS
7750), VISIT OF PRESIDENT PEREZ TO GUYANA (CARACAS 7763),
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PAGE 03 CARACA 08030 02 OF 02 251902Z

IMPLEMENTATION OF BONN ANTI-HIJACKING DECLARATION (CARACAS
7832), VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT COMMUNIQUE ON NICARAGUA
(CARACAS 7967), VENEZUELAN AIRLIFT FROM NICARAGUA (CARACAS
7968), VENEZUELAN AIRLIFT ENDS INPANAMA (CARACAS 8025),
LIMITED RESCISSION OF PREVIOUS IMPORT PROHIBITIONS
(CARACAS 7966), PRESIDENT DEFENDS ROLE OF FOREIGN TECHNOLOGY

IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF HEAVY OIL RESOURCES (CARACAS 7919),
VISIT OF STATE-TREASURY TEAM TO CARACAS AUGUST 18-20
(CARACAS 7815), GOV RADIO OPERATIONS (CARACAS 7761).
CROWLEY

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